

with the sex of the birds. The parents were extremely anxious about their chicks and terribly restless, and to this, I fear, is to be attributed the fact that I did not succeed in rearing the young.

Although the chicks soon began to feed and grew very rapidly at first, I soon observed that one after the other got something wrong with its breathing-organs, and to my great disappointment they died successively, so that the last was found dead a fortnight after they had been hatched. All that I can add is that, as is usual with chicks, the intensity of the coloration gradually diminished as they got older, and in particular the brightness of the yellow of the head and the depth of the black in front of the eyes slowly diminished, so that even when a week old the delicate glory of it had largely disappeared.

Perhaps next season the chicks (if I get any) will live, so that I may observe what the first plumage is like!

The chick of *Chen rossi* differs from that of *Chen hyperboreus* chiefly in having a shorter and comparatively higher bill and in the want of a blackish stripe over the head, which is present in *C. hyperboreus*. The chick of *C. hyperboreus* is also darker, especially on the back, and of a more olive-green colour, while the down is less dense.

XXIV.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

[Continued from p. 132.]

40. *Allen on Species and Subspecies.*

[So-called Species and Subspecies. By J. A. Allen. Reprinted from 'Science,' n. s. xvi. pp. 383-386, 1902.]

Mr. Allen, while viewing with much regret the extremely "fine splitting" into subspecies now so prevalent, contends that the expert, and not the layman, should be judge in such matters; for many forms, perfectly distinct on comparison, cannot well be described in terms that give a true idea of their value. He calls attention to the fact that the A. O. U. constantly refuses to recognise subspecies which are not in a

strict sense new discoveries, but depend only on a re-estimate of their nomenclatural value, while he makes a continued profession of his faith in trinomials.

As an answer to the paper which he cites from 'Science,' his observations are greatly to the point; but we think that he hardly lays enough emphasis on the fact that the primary object of all subdivisions is to make it easier, and not harder, to determine the various forms; while he might have taken the opportunity to denounce strongly the practice of claiming subspecific rank for what are often little more than incidental varieties.

41. *Andersen on the Birds of the Færoe Islands.*

[Meddelelser om Færøernes Fugle. 5te Række. Efter skriftlige Oplysninger fra P. F. Petersen, Nolso, og S. Niclassen, Myggenæs. Ved Knud Andersen. Vidensk. Meddel. f. d. naturh. Foren. i Kbhvn. 1902, pp. 325-365.]

This is a fifth instalment of Mr. Andersen's excellent notes on the ornithology of the Færoe Isles, giving the dates when the different species were observed, together with the state of the weather at the time. Notes on ninety-three species are given, of which perhaps the most interesting is that on the occurrence of the Song-Thrush (*Turdus musicus*) for the first time in the Færoes, late in February 1901.

42. 'The Avicultural Magazine.'

[The Avicultural Magazine. The Journal of the Avicultural Society. New Series. Vol. i. Nos. 1-4. Nov. 1902-Feb. 1903. (Cf. Ibis, 1903, p. 116.)]

In these parts of our contemporary the promise of former numbers is well maintained, and among other matters of interest may be mentioned the continuation of Mr. Bonhote's Field-notes on Bahama Birds, Mrs. Johnstone's paper on the nesting of the Satin Bower-bird in confinement, and those of Mr. St. Quintin on Tragopans in captivity, and of Mr. Martin on the construction of small Aviaries. Articles of varied character are provided to suit the tastes of all Aviculturists, who will join with us in congratulating the

editor on the skill with which he has catered for the public in general.

43. *Burturlin on the Waders of the Russian Empire.*

[Kuliki Rossieskoi Imperie—Premiya-k-Journal 'Psovaia i Rujeinaia Ohota.' Tula, 1902.]

This, the first part of a work on the *Limicola* found within the Russian empire, issued in the form of a prize essay published in Tula in the 'Journal of the Society for Hunting and Shooting,' shews very careful preparation, and gives the synonymy, with references to the most important works on the subject, the geographical distribution, the habits, and dates of appearance and departure of the species which visit or are resident within the limits of the Russian empire. M. Burturlin (p. 54) separates the Snipe inhabiting Eastern Siberia subspecifically from *Gallinago caelestis* under the name *Scolopax (Gallinago) gallinago raddei*, because it has the light stripes on the upper parts wider than in *Gallinago caelestis*, and states that it does not breed further west than the Yenesei River, while it winters in Southern China and Indo-China. He asserts that the tails figured by Seebohm as those of *Gallinago megalis* and *Gallinago stemura* are both referable to *Gallinago megalis*.

The letterpress includes only the species belonging to the genera *Scolopax* and *Gallinago*, but eleven good plates are given of the following:—*Scolopax rusticola*, *Gallinago gallinula*, *G. major*, *G. solitaria*, *G. caelestis*, *Limicola platyrhyncha*, *Tringa maritima*, *T. alpina*, *T. temminckii*, *T. minuta*, and *T. ruficollis*.

44. *Buxton's African Trips.*

[Two African Trips, with Notes and Suggestions on Big Game Preservation in Africa. By Edward North Buxton. London: Stanford, 1902.]

As in the case of his other "short stalks," Mr. Buxton went to British East Africa and the White Nile mainly in search of big game, but by no means confined his attention to such objects. Plenty of allusions to birds may be found

throughout his recent volume, and many of the excellent "photogravures" are devoted to scenes of bird-life. On the White Nile especially birds were most carefully studied and photographed. The "teeming bird-life" is designated as the "real charm of the voyage," and described as follows:—

"Owing to the heading back of the water of the White Nile by the tremendous floods of the Blue Nile, there are, during the season of low-water, wide stretches of bare mud on the foreshore and low-lying banks. These muds constitute the feeding-grounds of vast flocks of Waders and aquatic birds. The river opposite Omdurman was haunted by numbers of Gulls and Terns, unusual birds to find fifteen hundred miles from the sea, but whether they migrate hither or are bred in the marshes I do not know. By the time we tied up for the night we had only made ten miles, but in that short space we had seen huge flocks of Storks, Geese, grey Demoiselle Cranes, coal-black and snow-white Ibises, Spoonbills, Black-headed Gulls, Pelicans, Wood-Ibises, Avocets, Spur-winged Geese, Teal, and Ruddy Sheldrakes. The long lines of the last-named sitting at the edge of the water made a brilliant piece of colour in the setting sun. Some of the Storks and Ibises have the habit of spreading their wings to the sun; and when a row of them maintains this rigid attitude, they have the appearance of ladies holding up their skirts with both hands. Towards evening many of these birds shifted their ground and passed us on the wing with a great clatter. The next morning we added to the list of birds observed the Sacred Ibis, which has a white body with black head and neck. It was no doubt the striking appearance of this bird which attracted the ancient Egyptians, who domesticated it and mummied it after death. I think that it is now extinct or a rare visitor in Lower Egypt. An old friend, the Golden-crested Crane, was present, but in small numbers. I got out my long-range camera, from which I hoped great things, but a steady foundation is essential to that instrument, and I soon found that the vibration of the engine made a well-defined picture impossible. The pictures here given were really taken at a later stage."

Another passage about the bird-life of the White Nile reads as follows :—

“The lagoons were thronged with Storks, Herons, Ibises, Cranes, and other Waders of many kinds. While mobs of Teal were wheeling in the air, Geese, Sheldrakes, Terns, and ponderous Pelicans occupied the open water. The scene was most lively in the evening. The air then became full of the whistling of wings, and the varied conversation—piping, wailing, croaking—which goes on at feeding-time, as well as of those strange ventriloquising notes, the origin of which is so hard to trace, but which I was inclined to attribute in this case to Night-Herons. The Pelicans were the latest to arrive, and the most dignified and silent. They spend their days on the river, and, like the Terns, only come in to rest. Their flight—a series of stately curves—is a splendid sight. The Spoonbills seemed to fish the most zealously, pushing their broad beaks in front of them in the shallow water, like children with shrimp-nets on Cromer sands. Ever and anon the resonant shout of the Fish-Eagles, a pair of which were generally to be seen resting on some thorn-tree or dead snag, rang out over the waste like the call of the muezzin to prayer, while the other sounds reminded one of the stir in a Mohammedan city which follows the sunset in the month of Ramadan.”

45. *Clarke on the Migration of Birds.*

[Bird Migration in Great Britain and Ireland. Fifth Interim Report of the Committee, consisting of Professor Newton (Chairman), Rev. E. P. Knubley (Secretary), Mr. John A. Harvie-Brown, Mr. R. M. Barrington, Mr. A. H. Evans, and Dr. H. O. Forbes, appointed to work out the details of the Observations of Migration of Birds at Lighthouses and Light-ships, 1880-1887.]

Mr. W. E. Clarke here gives us a further instalment of his work connected with the Migration of Birds, work which he has carried out so well that we can only regret the possibility, through want of adequate support, of his being obliged to bring his undertaking to a premature conclusion. The subjects chosen for the present Report are the Fieldfare and the Lapwing; of the former the migrations prove to be

comparatively simple, while those of the latter are much affected by meteorological conditions.

46. *Dresser's 'Manual of Palearctic Birds.'*

[A Manual of Palearctic Birds. By H. E. Dresser, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c. Part I. pp. 1-498. 8vo. London, 1902. Published by the Author at 3 Hanover Square, W. Price 12s. 6d. net, thin paper copies 15s. net.]

The first portion of Mr. Dresser's long-expected Manual of the birds of the Palearctic Region has now been issued, and the second portion, completing the work, is promised for June next. The second half will contain, besides the remainder of the text, the Preface, Introduction, and Index, together with a map of the Palearctic area and a frontispiece taken from a drawing by Joseph Wolf. The present part commences with the Passeres, and treats of 609 species of that "predominant" group, after which follow the Picearians and Owls, making altogether 709 species. As there are 498 pages in the volume, the space allotted to each is rather more than two-thirds of a page, shewing that the condensation of information required in a work of this character has been well carried out.

After the English and scientific names adopted for each species, a selection of the principal references is given, the vernacular names in different languages are shortly stated, and a condensed description is added. Next the *habitat* is concisely given, followed by general remarks, in the course of which the breeding-habits, nest, and eggs, if known, are always mentioned.

Mr. Dresser is quite conservative in his nomenclature, very few deviations being made from the names ordinarily used by British naturalists. "Subspecies" are occasionally allowed, but they are quite the exception. The print of the book is good and clear, and the names of the genera are used as "running titles," which gives great facility for reference. Altogether we are much pleased with the "Palearctic Manual," which will certainly be greatly appreciated by all ornithologists and acquire an extensive circulation.

47. *Finn on Hybrids of the Guinea-fowl.*

[On Hybrids between the Guinea-fowl and Common Fowl. By F. Finn, B.A., F.Z.S. J. A. S. B. lxxi. pt. ii. pp. 91, 92, pl. vi., 1902.]

The author describes, with a figure, three hybrids caught in the wild state and sent to the Calcutta Zoological Gardens.

48. *Finn on Variation in Birds.*

[General Notes on Variation in Birds. By F. Finn, B.A., F.Z.S. J. A. S. B. lxxi. pt. ii. pp. 154-184, pls. viii., ix., 1902.]

This paper treats of (1) Striking cases of Variation in structural characters, (2) Colour Variation in Wild Birds, (3) Reversion to normal colour in abnormal varieties, (4) Variation in relation of immature to adult plumage, (5) Variation in prepotency, (6) Progressive Variation, (7) Variation directly induced by confinement, (8) Pathological Variation, (9) Spontaneous Variation under domestication, (10) Moral Variability, (11) Variation in mental powers, (12) Variation in taste, (13) Variation in habits. The author concludes that domestication does not directly induce variation, but gives varieties a better chance of surviving; that climate does not directly induce it, but may weed out colours correlated to unsuitable constitutions.

49. *Grinnell on Californian Birds.*

[Pacific Coast Avifauna.—No. 3. Check-list of Californian Birds. By Joseph Grinnell. Cooper Ornithological Club of California. Santa Clara, June 1902. Roy. 8vo. 98 pp.]

This list of 491 species—with an appendix containing 33 that are doubtful—has evidently been composed with great care, both as regards the identification of specimens and their provisional assignment to proper areas. To each specific name is added a synonymy referring only to Californian literature, and a paragraph on the status (including range, comparative abundance, and season of occurrence). The nomenclature of the A. O. U. Check-list is not invariably adopted, but reference numbers to it are given in

brackets. Two maps shew by means of different colours the "Life Zones," or areas of uniform temperature, and the "Faunal Areas," or regions of uniform humidity. The work will be found most useful by those interested in Californian ornithology.

50. *Hartert on Birds from Pahang.*

[On Birds from Pahang, Eastern Malay Peninsula. By Ernst Hartert. Nov. Zool. ix. p. 537.]

The native Malayan State of Pahang contains on its northern border an enormous mountain, Mt. Tahan, said to be upwards of 10,000 feet high, which Mr. Waterstradt, who made the collection now described, was the first European to explore. Species from the lowlands are included in the paper, and altogether 196 are enumerated. The general similarity of the avifauna to that of Sumatra "is very striking."

The occurrence of the remarkable Phasianine genus *Rheinardtius* in the Malay Peninsula is a new and most interesting fact. Mr. Rothschild has described the form as a new subspecies—*R. ocellatus nigrescens* (Bull. B. O. C. xii. p. 55).

Mr. Hartert also describes as new:—*Iole holti binghami* (from the Shan States of Burmah), *Pycnonotus prillwitzii* (from Java), *Turdinulus lumii* (from Mt. Tahan), *Siva strigula malayana* (from Mt. Tahan), *Saya waterstradti* (from Mt. Tahan), *Cittociocla macrura omassa* (from Java), *Pteruthius tahanensis* (from Mt. Tahan), *Ploceus passerinus infortunatus* (from the Malay Peninsula), and *Dissemurus paradiseus johni* (from Hainan). But by far the most remarkable discovery made on Gunong Tahan was the Bullfinch *Pyrrhula waterstradti* (Bull. B. O. C. xii. p. 69), procured at a height of from 5000 to 7000 feet. This intruding Palearctic genus was, however, known to occur in the highlands of Luzon (*P. leucogenys*).

51. *Hartert on Birds from Ecuador.*

[Some further Notes on the Birds of North-west Ecuador. By Ernst Hartert. Nov. Zool. ix. p. 599.]

Mr. Hartert continues his notes on the birds obtained by Mr. F. W. Rosenberg's correspondents in North-west Ecuador, which appears to be a very interesting district. The following species and subspecies are new:—*Mitrephanes berlepschi*, *Rhynchocyclus megacephalus flavotectus*, *Aulia tertia*, *Lathria virufa castaneotincta*, and *Hylophilus bulunensis*. A new genus of Tyrannidæ (*Craspedoprion*) is proposed for *Rhynchocyclus æquinoctialis* and some allied species with the outer web of the external remex pectinated. The splendid new *Pittasoma rufopileatum* (Nov. Zool. viii. p. 370) is figured.

52: *Hartert on Birds from British East Africa.*

[On the Birds collected by William Doherty in the Kikuyu Mountains, near Escarpment Station, British East Africa. By Ernst Hartert. Nov. Zool. xii. p. 620.]

The author here commences the discussion of a large collection of 3000 specimens made by the late William Doherty when encamped in the "Jumper" forest*, about half a mile from Escarpment Station on the Uganda Railway, between September 1900 and April 1901. The spot is on the eastern side of the "Great Rift Valley," or "Eurycolpic Fold" (as we are now told that it ought to be called), some 8000 feet above the sea-level.

Mr. Hartert begins with the Laniidæ, of which 12 species are represented in the collection. The beautiful new *Chlorophoneus dohertyi* (Rothsch. Bull. B. O. C. xi. p. 52) is figured. If the so-called *Malaconotus blanchoti* (p. 623) "agrees perfectly with South-African specimens," its correct

* This magnificent tree is believed to be *Juniperus procera* (see Kew Bull. 1899, p. 197), which was discovered by Schimper in Abyssinia, and was likewise found by Mr. Lort Phillips in Somaliland. But there are no specimens of it from British East Africa in the British Museum or the Kew Herbarium.

name should be *M. starki*. See Selater fil. Ibis, 1901, p. 152, and id. B. S. Afr. ii. p. 41.

53. *Job on Waterfowl.*

[Among the Waterfowl: Observation, Adventure, Photography. A Popular Narrative Account of the Waterfowl as found in the Northern and Middle States of Lower Canada, East of the Rocky Mountains. By Herbert K. Job. 8vo. New York: Doubleday, Page, & Co. 1902. Pp. xxi, 224. Price 6s. 6d.]

In this book Mr. Job gives an interesting account of his observations on birds in the above-mentioned districts, and furnishes a large quantity of information with regard to the breeding of North-American Waterfowl, which may well be unfamiliar to, or not readily obtainable by, English ornithologists. Grebes and Divers, Rock-birds, Petrels, Terns, Ducks, and Geese are successively brought before us; while instances of unusual habits, such as the breeding of the American Herring-Gull on trees and the covering with earth of the eggs of the White-winged Scoter, are especially dwelt upon. The reproductions of photographs are, moreover, well chosen and distinct.

54. *Jourdain on the Birds of Derbyshire.*

[The Ornithology of Derbyshire. A Retrospect. By the Rev. Francis C. R. Jourdain, M.A. Reprinted from the Derbyshire Archæol. & Nat. Hist. Soc. Journ. 1901. 5 pp.]

An interesting paper on the birds of the county, with regard to their increase or decrease.

55. *Lord Lilford on Birds.*

[Lord Lilford on Birds, being a Collection of informal and unpublished writings by the late President of the British Ornithologists' Union, with contributed Papers upon Falconry and Otter-Hunting, his favourite Sports. Edited by Aubyn Trevor-Battye and illustrated by Archibald Thorburn. London, 1903. Pp. i-xviii, 1-312. Price 16s. net.]

It is impossible to take up a book by the late President of our Union without a feeling of renewed regret at the great loss experienced by our Society at his death, while those who

had the privilege of his acquaintance, or were familiar with his formerly published writings, will feel confident of meeting with what will interest and instruct them in his pages. Lord Lilford himself never posed as one of the great ornithological authorities of his day, and as such we should not therefore attempt to portray him ; but for genuine and careful work on the subjects which he took in hand he had hardly an equal, while as a kindly and judicious supporter of those who took a real interest in birds he will always be exceptionally difficult to replace.

Of his character as a true gentleman the letters now published give evidence on almost every page, of his position as a noted naturalist and ardent sportsman they are equally convincing, while the simple and graceful style in which he dilates upon items of local information, matters connected with his aviaries, or facts gleaned upon his journeys, may well make us forget how large a portion of his life was passed under conditions which would hinder most of us from serious work. In editing these letters, Mr. Trevor-Battye has very wisely omitted only those paragraphs which deal with purely personal matters or incidents of merely local interest, and has included all that deal with natural history ; while he has himself furnished a short account of otter-hunting and has induced the Rev. G. E. Freeman to contribute a description of falconry.

The letters are grouped in chapters according to the subjects ; and while all will be found of interest, perhaps the greatest importance for ornithologists attaches to the Notes from Mediterranean Journals—on which the papers in ‘The Ibis’ (1875–1887) were founded—and to the portions of the work concerned with the well-known Lilford ponds and aviaries, where so many rare birds lived and bred. Our late President’s life, his home, and his works (with their illustrations) are all fully treated, while the pages are enriched by thirteen plates by Mr. A. Thorburn, including a portrait of Lord Lilford, and many studies from life of birds in the collection.

56. *Mudge on the Tongue of Parrots.*

[On the Myology of the Tongue of Parrots, with a Classification of the Order, based upon the Structure of the Tongue. By G. P. Mudge, A.R.C.S., F.Z.S. Trans. Zool. Soc. Lond. vol. xvi. pt. 5, pp. 211-278, pls. xxvi.-xxix.]

After a short account of previous memoirs upon the anatomy of Parrots, which embrace but few observations upon the tongue-muscles, Mr. Mudge proceeds to give in detail the structure of the hyoid muscles in a large number of species, which are elaborately illustrated in the plates and in 16 woodcuts interspersed through the text. It is, of course, impossible to give here an adequate abstract of the many new facts which the paper contains. The classificatory results, however, based upon the "lingual myology and osteology," will be of wide interest. Mr. Mudge divides the "group" into three families—(1) Loriidæ, containing *Lorius*, *Eos*, and *Vini*; (2) Nestoridæ, containing only *Nestor*; and (3) Psittacidæ, containing all the remaining genera.

57. *Ogilvie-Grant on Shrikes.*

[A Review of the Species of Shrikes of the Genus *Lanius*. By W. R. Ogilvie-Grant. Nov. Zool. ix. p. 449.]

The species of the difficult genus *Lanius* (in its wide sense, *i. e.* including *Fiscus*, *Enneoctonus*, &c.) are now reviewed preparatory to the publication of a new edition of the eighth volume of the B. M. Catalogue, upon which the author is engaged. Mr. Ogilvie-Grant recognises no less than 57 species of the genus, with a few "subspecies." We are pleased to observe that all the Shrikes in the British List retain their well-known titles in Mr. Grant's nomenclature. *Lanius major*, *L. excubitor*, *L. homeyeri*, and *L. leucopterus* are allowed full rank as species, though it is admitted that "they all grade into one another."

58. *Pease's 'Travel and Sport in Africa.'*

[Travel and Sport in Africa. By A. E. Pease. 3 vols. 4to. London, 1902. Price £10 10s.]

Mr. Alfred Pease's account of his sport and adventures

in Algeria, Somaliland, and Abyssinia is one of the most sumptuously printed and illustrated works that we have ever seen. The three volumes are full of text-figures and coloured sketches, and contain a mass of information on every possible subject relating to the countries which the author has traversed, while descending, in many cases, to the most minute particulars. We wish that we could find time to read all these luxurious pages, for many of the stories are of a most amusing character—but life is too short!

Mr. Pease naturally devotes himself specially to “Big Game,” but feathered fowls are occasionally mentioned, and the lists of birds necessitate a record of the work in the pages of ‘The Ibis.’

In the first volume is a “List of the Birds of Algeria and Tunis,” by W. R. Ogilvie-Grant. This contains the names of 387 species, in English and Latin, with references to the leading authorities on each of them, as indicated by initials.

In the third volume, which relates to Somaliland and Abyssinia, is a similar list of the birds of those countries by the same author, the limits assigned being “between 5° and 13° N. lat. and east of 37° E. long.” It contains the names of no less than 687 species, with the authorities for their occurrence within the area indicated by initials, which refer to a list of the chief works on the subject. The names of the species of which examples were obtained by Mr. Pease (who was accompanied by Mr. L. C. Harwood as collector) are marked with an asterisk. The collection made on the last journey, which included 800 excellent skins, has been already fully described in this journal (see ‘Ibis,’ 1901, pp. 607–699).

59. *Peel on Zoological Gardens.*

[The Zoological Gardens of Europe, their History and chief Features. By C. V. A. Peel, F.Z.S. London, 1903. Price 10s. net.]

This useful book, on quite a new subject, gives us an account of the principal zoological gardens of Europe, based on information collected during a tour round them made by

the author in the early part of last year. Thirty-seven gardens in all were visited, in France, Holland, Denmark, Belgium, Germany, Russia, Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, and the British Islands, and a more or less detailed account is given of each, enriched by photographic illustrations. There are a good many slips and misprints in the letterpress, but Mr. Peel has produced a very readable volume, which we are sure will be much appreciated. The Zoological Garden of Berlin is, no doubt correctly, pronounced to be the best on the Continent, although there must be some error in the statement on p. 106 that it contains "25,000 living creatures," representing 12,000 mammals and birds. Whether it is "well ahead of our London Garden" is, perhaps, a matter of opinion.

In a second edition we hope that the author will correct numerous misprints in the scientific names of the animals and other mistakes. He should also extend the sphere of his observations, and visit the gardens in the United States, at New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, not to mention those at Cairo, Pretoria, and Calcutta.

60. *Preble on the Biology of Hudson Bay.*

[A Biological Investigation of the Hudson Bay Region. By Edward A. Preble. North-American Fauna, No. 22. 8vo. Washington, 1902. 140 pp., 14 pls., 1 map.]

Since the days of the early pioneers, who sent many specimens for determination to Britain, singularly little advance has been made in our knowledge of the fauna of Hudson Bay, and the U.S. biologists have consequently found considerable difficulty in determining the status of many species through want of sufficient material for comparison. The outcome has been an expedition sent by the Biological Survey to the western shores of the Bay in 1900, in charge of Mr. E. A. Preble, who furnishes a very full account of the districts traversed, with details of the "life zones" and botany, while he has not forgotten to sketch the work of previous explorers and to add a bibliography. The Report confines itself almost entirely to the province of Keewatin, in

Canada, and provides annotated lists of the mammals, birds, and batrachians. No new species of birds were discovered.

61. *Reichenow's Report on the Progress of Ornithology.*

[Bericht über die Leistungen in der Naturgeschichte der Vögel während des Jahres 1894. Von Ant. Reichenow. Arch. f. Nat. 61^{te} Jahrg. 2^{te} Band, "Berlin, 1895" (published Dec. 1902).]

We do not doubt the excellence of Dr. Reichenow's report on the progress of the Science of Ornithology for the year 1894, nor the care with which it has been prepared. But we must say that its value is rendered almost nugatory by its being withheld from publication till December 1902. Events move fast now-a-days, even in ornithology, and a report on what has occurred in 1894, published eight years afterwards, is almost useless. We have been informed, however, that the fault of this long delay lies with the publishers and not with the author, consequently we have only to offer our sympathies to Dr. Reichenow on the bad treatment that his good work has met with.

62. *Ridgway on the Birds of North and Middle America.*

[The Birds of North and Middle America. By Robert Ridgway. Part II. Bull. U.S. Nat. Mus. no. 50, pt. 2 (1902).]

We have already noticed the first volume of this important work (see 'Ibis,' 1902, p. 515), and are glad to find the second volume succeeding it so rapidly. While the first was entirely occupied by Mr. Ridgway's account of the numerous Fringillidæ of North and Middle America, four families of nine-primaried Oscines are treated in the present instalment, namely, Tanagridæ, Icteridæ, Cœrebidæ, and Mniotiltidæ. These families are entirely restricted to the Neogean Ornis, having no single representative in the Old World. We wrote somewhat freely of Mr. Ridgway's novel style of treatment of his subject in our former notice, and will not repeat our remarks, except to say that in the present volume also subspecies are excessively numerous, and are placed, apparently, on the same level as species. Of Tanagridæ 112 species and subspecies are recognised as

coming within the limits of the work, of Icteridæ 111, of Cœrebidæ 29, and of Mniotiltidæ 181, so that the volume contains an account of 433 species and subspecies in all.

The general plan of this volume is exactly the same as that of the first; while the synonymy, descriptions of sexes and their plumages, and full list of localities appended to each species and subspecies, bear unflinching testimony to the author's wonderful industry in compiling it.

The third part of Mr. Ridgway's great work, we are informed in the Preface, is "well under way," and is by this time probably nearly ready for issue. It will continue the account of the Oscines. The whole work will occupy some eight volumes, which will appear at the rate of about two a year.

63. Rothschild and Hartert on Birds from the Solomon Islands.

[List of a Collection of Birds made on Ysabel Island, in the Solomon Group, by Mr. A. S. Meek. Nov. Zool. xii. p. 581.]

The authors continue their account of Mr. Meek's collections in the Solomon group, this being their third contribution on the subject. In the present paper 58 species from Ysabel Island are enumerated, amongst which *Edoliosoma erythropterygium saturatius*, *Cacomantis meeki*, *Ceyx meeki*, and *Astur rufo-schistaceus* are described as new. *Nasiterna tristrami* from Kulambangra is also described as new. Other good novelties of this series (*Pitta anerythra*, *Podargus inexpectatus*, and *Pseudoptynx salomonensis*) have been already characterized in the 'Bulletin' of the B. O. C. *Pitta anerythra* and *Ceyx meeki* are figured.

64. Seebohm and Sharpe's 'Monograph of the Thrushes.'

[A Monograph of the Turdidæ, or Family of Thrushes. By the late Henry Seebohm. Edited and completed (after the Author's death) by R. Bowdler Sharpe, LL.D., F.L.S., &c. Parts XII., XIII. Imperial 4to. London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1902. Price £3 3s.]

We have now before us the concluding double-number of

Seebohm's 'Monograph of the Thrushes,' of which the first part was published in 1898. Dr. Sharpe, in his Preface, clearly explains the reason of the delay in its completion, and we cannot but sympathize with him in the difficult task that he has had to perform. Seebohm, it is well known, was very familiar with this group of birds, which was one of his special favourites. A large series of plates were prepared by Mr. Keulemans for the projected work, but other occupations and bad health prevented the author from attending to the letterpress, and Dr. Sharpe has consequently been called upon to write or rewrite the greater portion of the book. We are, however, sure that ornithologists will be well satisfied with the way in which he has accomplished this hard piece of work, for the result is that we have all the available information upon this beautiful group of birds collected together in one book, and most splendidly illustrated by Keulemans' pencil. Even the most recent additions to our knowledge of the subject are contained in the Appendix.

The Monograph now completed makes two handsome volumes containing 149 coloured plates. Seebohm's division of the Thrushes into *Geocichla*, *Turdus*, *Merula*, and *Mimocichla* is adhered to, but personally we should be inclined to amalgamate the first three genera.

The following species are figured in the present parts:—

<i>Merula subalaris</i> .		<i>Merula atrigularis</i> .
— <i>hortulorum</i> .		— <i>naumanni</i> .
— <i>protomomelæna</i> .		— <i>ruficollis</i> .
— <i>celænops</i> .		— <i>eunomus</i> .
— <i>chrysolaus</i> .		<i>Mimocichla rubripes</i> .
— <i>erythropleura</i> .		— <i>plumbea</i> .
— <i>obscura</i> .		— <i>ardesiaca</i> .
— <i>pallida</i> .		

65. *Westell on the young Cuckoo.*

[The Early Life of the young Cuckoo. By W. Percival Westell. 8vo. London, 1902. 26 pp. Price 1s.]

Mr. Westell gives a useful *résumé* of the life-history of the

Cuckoo, but the main object of his pamphlet is, no doubt, to reproduce four admirable photographs, which he tells us were taken from nature by Mr. J. P. Millar, at the instigation of Mr. John Craig, who was carrying out a series of investigations upon the subject. Of these, three shew the nestling Cuckoo ejecting a young bird or an egg from the nest, while the fourth exhibits the intruder living in harmony, at an age of about eleven days, with a young Meadow-Pipit.

66. *Zittel's 'Palæontology,'* vol. ii.

[Text-book of Palæontology. By Karl A. von Zittel. English edition, translated and edited by Charles E. Eastman, Ph.D. Vol. II. London: Macmillan.]

The recently issued second volume of the English translation of Zittel's 'Text-book of Palæontology' contains the part relating to Aves, which has been revised, and to a great extent rewritten, by Mr. F. A. Lucas, of the U.S. National Museum at Washington. It must be carefully studied by all who are interested in fossil birds. The classification employed is practically that of Stejneger's 'Standard Natural History.'

We extract a very salient passage from the introduction:—

“The difficulties attending the classification of birds are at once their great general similarity of structure and their numerous adaptive modifications, sometimes slight, sometimes so great as to obscure characters of real value. There are, besides, a certain number of aberrant forms, the exact position of which is a matter of uncertainty, and others in which there are departures more or less pronounced from the general structure of the group in which they should obviously be placed. For it must be constantly borne in mind that in palæornithology we are not dealing with the entire Class of birds, but only with a certain portion of it, since the number of known fossil birds is very small, and it is consequently impossible to trace the lines of descent of existing species; we do not even have broken lines to guide us, but merely isolated dots to indicate their probable

existence. For the proportion of fossil to existing birds is small indeed, about 500 extinct to 12,000 living species, and most of these are from the Miocene or later horizons; they are easily referable to existing families, and often to existing genera, so that they throw little light on the phylogeny of modern birds."

XXV.—*Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.*

WE have received the following letters addressed to "The Editors" :—

SIRS,—Referring to your remarks ('Ibis,' 1902, p. 674) on the dead birds seen by Mr. R. W. Llewellyn at the Casquets Lighthouse on May 15th, I venture to suggest that they were possibly Common Redstarts (*Ruticilla phoenicurus*), the males of which are brightly coloured on the breast.

In Ireland, at any rate, few if any Robins are migrating in May, whereas the end of April or beginning of May is the usual date for Redstarts to arrive. I agree with you that the birds are very unlikely to have been Red-breasted Flycatchers (*Muscicapa parva*).

Yours &c.,

RICHARD M. BARRINGTON.

Fassaroe, Bray,
Co. Wicklow.

SIRS,—In reference to my remarks on the Albatrosses (see above, p. 81), I wish to add that Dr. Davidson, of ss. 'Morning,' has just brought to the Museum two specimens of a Mollymawk from the Indian Ocean, which I take to be the true *Diomedea culminata*. They are certainly distinct from *Diomedea bulleri* of the Snares, and therefore the latter remains a good species. The difference between *D. bulleri* and *D. culminata* is in the culmicorn, which is more expanded posteriorly in *D. bulleri* than in *D. culminata*. If *D. bulleri* had been put into the genus *Thalassogeron*, and